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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the process and the products of negotiation in the ethical conflicts of teaching, focusing on the ethical conflicts experienced by early education teachers. Participants included urban kindergarten and elementary school teachers from several Finnish public day care centers and schools. The study examined various categories of negotiation, negotiating issues, and the interactive relationships involved with negotiation. Data came from 26 reports about ethical conflicts written by the participating teachers. Data were gathered during an inservice training on ethical issues in teaching. Teachers wrote about a real-life moral dilemma they had experienced in their work and provided a just solution to it. The ethical conflicts were then categorized according to the contacts and relations involved in the negotiation of a dilemma. The study introduced a three-type continuum which covered confrontation, consultation, and cooperation. The paper presents each type of negotiation together with conflicting issues, negotiating partners, and the end results. (Contains 51 references.) (SM)

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Negotiating ethics as relational knowing -
a pedagogical space between 'right' and 'wrong'

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Negotiating ethics as relational knowing- a pedagogical space between 'right' and 'wrong'

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ABSTRACT The study aims to investigate the process and the products of negotiation in ethical conflicts of teaching. The study focuses on ethical conflicts experienced by early education teachers. The teachers of the study (N=26) were employed as kindergarten and elementary school teachers from different public daycare centers and schools. The main interest of the study was to uncover different categories of negotiation, negotiating issues, and the interactive relationships involved in them. The end results experienced within each type of negotiation are presented together with concrete examples of each type of negotiation.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been an increased interest in professional ethics within the field of education. These activities warrant consideration about the "field" of these issues (Strike & Soltis, 1985; Strike & Ternasky, 1993; Sockett, 1993; Oser, 1994; Hansen, 1995, 1998, 1999; Colnerud, 1997). Previous research on ethical dilemmas in teaching reveals that most teachers are not always aware of the moral impact of their actions (Jackson, Boostrom & Hansen, 1993). Furthermore, teachers have reported that they are ill-prepared for dealing with moral dilemmas that they identify in their work (Lyons, 1990; Tirri, 1999).

Because teachers work in public institutions and make decisions in which the public are involved, they likely need professional skills to enhance their decision making. No "definite answers" appear to exist because the answers to considerations of these professional tasks always can be contested. However, no moral movement of any kind is possible without some sense of direction (i.e. that "this is better" and "that is worse"). Therefore, in pedagogical discourse there should be room for negotiating.

Morality can be defined as an active process by which individuals come to understanding meanings relating to social interactions (MacCadden, 1998). In the context of the school community, the values of teachers, parents and students are in a constant engagement with each other. Therefore, pedagogical discourses must be understood as open-ended and fallible: conclusions and agreements reached should be open to revision (Chambers, 1993, p. 231). This is because the application of

principles often depends upon negotiation and compromise among people who have different ideas of what is desirable (Wallace, 1988).

Pedagogical discourse can be seen as a process of negotiation, focusing not only upon the points with which people start, but also upon how people respond to the responses and suggestions of others (van Es, 1996). There is room for negotiating when it is unclear which value or interest is regarded as most important, or when several interests are at stake at one time. The vast majority of educational problems cannot be solved procedurally by applying a uniquely suitable formula or technique. Instead, solutions to such problems must be found by an interactive consideration of means and ends. In addition, teaching is strongly connected to the betterment of students. Professionally, the teacher is morally responsive to the client's needs, whether the client is defined as the student, the parent(s) or the public community. The teacher has moral obligations to these individuals or groups and this responsibility can be expressed through responsive relationships in negotiation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Relational knowing

The negotiating approach comes close to the concept of relational knowing (Hollingsworth *et al.*, 1993; Webb & Blond, 1995; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). The concept of knowing through relationships involves, according to Hollingsworth *et al.* (1993), both its instant character and "the reflection on what is currently known. Because of its fluid and present character, however, it would seem problematic to call it relational *knowledge*" (p. 9; emphasis original). The narrative and conversation discourse that displays relational knowing does not represent the "indexicality of mental operations"; but rather, as Shotter (1993) states, it suggests to "this flow of responsive and relational activities and practices" (p. 7).

To view our knowing abilities in this way - as being formed through a matrix of relations, rather than as an already existing storage - shifts our attention to people's responsive understanding of each other. In Shotter's (1993) words: knowing in this sense is "the joint activity between people and their socially constituted situations that 'structures' what people do or say, not wholly they themselves" (p. 8). When individuals come to know in relationships they enter a hermeneutic circle as "conversational participants" (Shotter, 1993) or as persons whose "paths through life have fallen together" (Rorty, 1980). According to this stance, in these situations they do not rely on a clearly articulated epistemological framework to reach some fixed end. Their rhetorical-responsive approach (Shotter, 1993) makes a case for continual questioning of received information through dialogue "that contains a space for

wonder, mystery, uncertainty, and the barely knowable" (Bayer, 1988, in Hollingsworth *et al.*, 1993, p. 9).

In such a space, knower and the known cannot be separated. On the contrary, the task becomes to seek an understanding of how an individual is engaged in her/his interactive processes of knowing. According to Greene (1994), the stance leads to "viewing knowing primarily as a search for the meaning of things with respect to acts performed and with respect to the consequences of those acts when performed" (p. 435). Thus, Fenstermacher & Sanger (1998) state, "to know is a form of competence, an ability to navigate the puzzlements and predicaments of life with moral and intellectual surefootedness" (p. 471).

According to Hollingsworth *et al.* (1993), this relational character of knowing can be understood "through an intersecting tapestry of theoretical perspectives" (p. 8). According to their advice, we delimit our theories to three. Next, we present briefly how theories of sociocultural construction of knowing, theories of self-other relationships, and theories of dialogism and joint action can contribute to the concept and practice of negotiating as relational knowing.

Sociocultural construction of knowing

Where cognitive and early constructivist theories focused on the interior of the mind, sociocultural approach moves our interest to the context of behavior, to the social situation within which the action takes place. Within this view, the abilities and capabilities of the mind are formed and constituted in part by social phenomena. As Williams (1979) states, at this point "the individual and personal presuppose public and intersubjective" (p. 110).

Here, the task of the analysis is to "understand how mental functioning is related to cultural, institutional, and historical context" (Wertsch, 1998, p. 24). The stance forces us to go beyond the individual agent when trying to understand the forces that shape human action. Certain claims characterize sociocultural construction of knowledge. Wertsch (1998) examines these premises. Here, we consider briefly five tenets of sociocultural knowledge construction.

First, while we can isolate certain elements for an analysis, it is important to note that these elements are phenomena that do not actually exists independently of action (p. 25).

Second, sociocultural action typically has multiple simultaneous goals. Furthermore, these multiple goals are often in conflict with each other. This means that in many cases sociocultural knowledge cannot be adequately interpreted if we presuppose only one neatly identifiable goal. Instead, as Wertsch (*ibid.*) reminds us,

"multiple goals, often in interaction and sometimes in conflict, are typically involved" (p. 32).

Third, we can understand sociocultural action only if we understand its origin and the changes it has undergone. It also involves a great deal of uncertainty and accident. However, in order to understand it, we must have some assumptions about its aim or end point. Wertsch (1998) sums up: a certain complexity and ambivalence characterize most actions and interpretations of sociocultural knowledge (pp. 34-38).

Fourth, culture constrains as well as enables our actions. Depending on our premises and our capabilities, we either tend to emphasize the enabling potential of our environment or we may perceive our surroundings in more restricted ways. In Wertsch's view, "this process affects not only how we talk about reality but how we observe it in general" (p. 40).

Fifth, sociocultural construction of knowledge is associated with issues of power and authority. Usually, we tend to focus on the authority of an individual agent or the power of institutions. Instead of arguing whether it is either the individual agent or our social institutions that really is the foundation of power and authority, the sociocultural view "makes it possible to 'live in the middle' and to address the sociocultural situatedness of action, power, and authority" (Wertsch, 1998, p. 65).

Self-other relations in negotiating

In order to understand the social processes that are involved in negotiation, many authors (Nias, 1989, Kelchtermans, 1993; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, Powell, 1996; Graue *et al.*, 2001; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002) suggest that teaching requires a dynamic understanding of self in relationship to others in various and multiple contexts. The crux of these approaches is that knowing through relationships to self and 'significant others' (students, teacher colleagues, principals, and parents) is central to the practice of teaching.

Connelly & Clandinin (1995) speak about a "matrix of relations" that calls for a major move in the area of teachers' pedagogical knowing in which "common terms are reshaped" (p. 25). The process means a shift in viewing teachers' knowing and the shift is both an epistemological and a moral one. It is epistemological in the sense that it represents "a redefinition of a worthwhile problem of educational knowledge", and it is a moral one representing "a shift in the moral landscape of inquiry" (p. 25). This connection of epistemological and moral matters is intimate to such an extent that, actually, we might "overlook the significance of the shift in perspective because the terms remain the same while the language and arguments appear as dialects" (p. 26). But underneath, Connelly & Clandinin (*ibid.*) emphasize, the differences are significant. According to this stance, teachers are seen as knowers with their own

epistemological relations to their milieu, rather than actors merely transmitting socially valued 'formal knowledge'. As Nias (1989) emphasizes, teachers' 'selves' in the processes of knowledge construction are inescapably social (p. 20).

In negotiation teachers' selves do not reside in contemplation but become clarified in action. Frequently, this kind of action is embodied by commitment to differing degrees. For many, the notion of commitment is central to how teachers reason and justify their pedagogical actions in negotiation situations (Noddings, 1984, 1992; Elbaz, 1992; Hollingsworth *et al.*, 1993; Tirri *et al.*, 1999). Professionally, teachers are committed to promote 'the best interests of their students' However, the ethics of the teaching profession are wide reaching and draw together many kinds of complexities involved in the process of negotiation. For trusting and workable relationships to exist, it is not enough that educators be understood as being 'pro-kids'. The parents, students, and colleagues should also know teachers as individuals who are responsible and capable of looking after children in our schools. (Tirri & Husu, 2002)

Rhetorical-responsive knowledge construction

As mentioned previously, the perspective of self-other relations is largely based on interdependence and concern for another's well-being. The relationships are experienced as responses to others in their own situations and contexts. The issue is, as Lyons (1983) states it: how to respond to others in such a way that also maintains those relations and promotes the welfare of others. Usually, the place of these encounters is some sort of discussion between the partners. These 'meetings' can have various forms: They can be either explicit or implicit, direct or indirect, open or uncommunicative. As MacIntyre (1981) puts it, "[c]onversation, understood widely enough, is the form of human transaction in general" (p. 197).

Discursive practices can also be used as tools by which the knowledge construction may be interpreted. Shotter (1993, p. 18) speaks about "the knowing of the third kind" which redirects attention from a focus upon how individuals understand and apply formal theories and principles to how they understand each other in their practical settings. The stance focuses upon people's use of their ways of talking to construct both their social relationships and their knowing. Within this flow of responsive and relational practices, socially significant dimensions of interaction originate and are formed. Here, people's responsive understanding of each other is the important issue. Shotter (1993) argues that this kind of joint activity between people actually structures what people do and say. Attention to it reveals a complex and uncertain process of testing and checking various kinds of knowledge issues: issues to

do with judgements about obligations such as care, responsibility, and justice (pp. 17-31).

Shotter (1993) speaks about "joint action". It occurs in a "zone of uncertainty" and it has two major features which he states in the following way:

1. "As people coordinate their activity with the activities of others, and 'respond' to them in what they do, what they as individuals desire and what actually results in their exchanges are often two very different things. In short, joint action produces *unintended* and unpredicted outcomes. These generate a 'situation', or an 'organized practical-moral setting' existing between all the participants. As its organization cannot be traced back to the intentions of any particular individuals, it is *as if* it has a 'given', a 'natural', or an 'externally caused' nature; though, to those within it, it is 'their/our' situation.
2. Although such a setting is unintended by any of the individuals within it, it nonetheless has an *intentional* quality to it: it seems both to have a 'content', as well as to 'indicate' or to be 'related to something other beyond itself'; that is, participants find themselves both immersed 'in' an already *given* situation, but one with a *horizon* to it, that makes it 'open' to their actions. Indeed, its 'organization' is such that the practical-moral constraints (and enablements) it makes available to them influence, that is, 'invite' and 'motivate', their next possible actions." (p. 39; original emphasis)

The notion of joint action can be used as a tool through which to look at the workings of rhetorical-responsive knowledge construction. By its use, Shotter (*ibid.*) concludes, "we can see that in the ordinary two-way flow of activity between them, people create, without a conscious realization of the fact, a changing sea of *moral* enablements and constraints ... - in short, an ethos" (p. 39, emphasis original).

METHOD AND DATA ANALYSIS

According to Code (1987), only stories that tie the issues together provide an adequate context for epistemic evaluations because the factors that govern such evaluations are that rich and complex. In this chapter we present a relational method for reading and interpreting written case reports of individuals' lived experiences of ethical conflicts and choice. Such a method focuses on the reading process and the creation of an interpretative account of those reports.

Data

The data includes 26 written reports of ethical conflicts experienced by early education teachers. These teachers were Finnish kindergarten and early elementary school teachers from urban public schools. The data was gathered during an in-service training on ethical issues in teaching. Each teacher was asked to write about a real-life moral dilemma they had experienced in their work and to provide a just solution to it. The request was formulated in the following way: *Describe a situation in your work in early education in which you have had difficulties to decide what would be the right thing to do from a ethical point of view.* In addition, the teachers were provided some detailed questions about the relationships, context and the solution of the dilemma.

Reading guide

In the analysis, we have adopted a qualitative reading guide to examine the processes of negotiation of pedagogical dilemmas. The reading guide is based on the evidence that persons simultaneously know (can recognize, speak in, and respond to) various different perspectives in discussing moral issues and may show a preference for one over the other (Brown *et al.*, 1989, 1991; Gilligan *et al.*, 1990; Johnston, 1989).

In reading texts, we regard persons as moral agents with respect to the concerns about the relationship they present and those they keep silent. The reading guide aims to highlight the various ethical perspectives, as well as the sense of tension people often convey in their case reports of lived moral experiences. Thus, it attempts to record the complexity of case reports of moral conflicts and choice, and attempts to capture the personal, relational, and cultural dimensions of lived experiences (Brown *et al.*, 1991, p. 29). The reading guide focuses on interpreting the narrator's way of seeing and speaking about the phenomenon.

The method focuses on the reading process and the creation of an interpretative account of a narrative case report. According to Bahktin (1981), individual words and phrases that are used to describe moral thought, feeling, and action are meaningless in and of themselves to explain the particular meaning (p. 276). Therefore, as Brown *et al.* (1991) interpret, "[t]he living language exists only in a web of interrelationships that allow a narrator's meaning to become clear only if the context, the narrative, is maintained" (p. 27). Thus, it is only by allowing language to exist in narrative relationships that it is possible to interpret and understand another's experiences.

Interpretative procedures

The reading guide aims to provide an approach to interpreting negotiating case reports. It allows a reader to specify the ways in which a person chooses between or lives with conflict and choice in negotiating situations. The author read the case

reports a total of four consecutive times from four different perspectives. The four perspectives and their multiple readings provided a practical frame of reference for the investigated dilemma by analyzing the negotiation process from different viewpoints.

The first reading was intended to establish the story written by the narrator. The reader aimed to understand the story and its context (the who, what, where, when, and why of the story). Such close attention to the text helped the reader to locate the person telling the story, sets the scene, and established the flow of events. In our analysis, the first reading produced the three main types of negotiation.

The second reading focused on conflict problems in negotiations - the writer's expressed concerns about the source of the dilemma. Here the reader attended to the sources of the conflict between the "I" (the teacher) who appears as an actor in the story and "others," often represented as rivals in the best interest of the students. The reading produced the negotiation issues of the conflict problems.

The third reading aimed to uncover the negotiating partners in teachers' case reports. Pedagogically, solutions to the dilemmas were often found by an interactive consideration of means and ends. In our analysis, the third reading produced the negotiating associates with whom the dilemmas are dealt with.

The fourth reading focused on the evaluation of the negotiations taken and their possible results. Solutions to ethical conflicts were found only by doing something, by acting. The elements of a just solution were often interwoven throughout the story, and the evaluation of them required a fourth relational reading. In our analysis, the final reading produced the experienced end results of the negotiations.

After each of the four readings, the reader filled in a summary worksheet. For the reader, the worksheets provided a place to document relevant pieces of the text and to make observations and interpretative remarks. The worksheets were intended to emphasise the move from the narrator's written words to the readers' interpretation or summary of them. They required the readers to substantiate their interpretation with quotes from the written story itself. As such, the worksheets stand between the written case report and the generalised interpretations drawn from the particular cases. According to Brown *et al.* (1991), "they provide a trail of evidence from the readers' interpretations of the narrative" (p. 33).

In the final step of the reading process, the reader uses the summary worksheets that aim to capture the details of negotiating categories, negotiating issues, interactive relationships, and the experienced end results in order to summarise the negotiating narrative. Category issues aim at providing a brief interpretation of the

writers' representation of their lived moral experience. They are presented as a summary interpretation resulting from the four relational and consequential readings.

RESULTS

The ethical conflicts were categorized according to the contacts and relations involved in the negotiation of a dilemma. For picturing negotiation in case reports, the study introduced a three-type continuum which covered "confrontation", "consultation", and "co-operation". Next, each type of negotiation is presented together with conflicting issues, negotiating partners, and the end results experienced in the investigated cases.

Cases of confrontation

When negotiations took the form of confrontation (N=8/26) teachers tended to promote their professional views. Here, teachers' professional (self-)interests were promoted according to opportunism. In majority of the cases, teachers tended to use their authoritative power as professional experts who "put their word against the other." The following quote from a case report demonstrates a conflict between a teacher and her colleagues which did not find a solution despite negotiations:

> *"I started my new work in the kindergarten. They told me that their philosophy is to be as child-centered as possible. Very soon I noticed that this child-centered approach was a laissez-faire approach to education. Many parents had noticed the same thing and some of them complained about it. My colleagues in this kindergarten called their approach as constructive way of learning and accused me being a behaviorist. I started to pay attention to the eating habits of the children and I demanded some kind of behavior in lunch table. The children were confused because earlier they had been allowed to do whatever they want. The conflict I experienced in this situation was related to my own philosophy of education and the ultimate freedom given to the children in this kindergarten. I believe children need some guidelines and rules to learn to be citizens. My problem was whether I should adapt to their freedom or follow my own educational ideas. Many parents supported my ideas of making some rules for the children. However, the dilemma still remains unsolved. Now the children behave in a different way with different teachers. There are now guidelines that the whole community should follow. I find this situation very difficult. I am trying to start discussions with my colleagues. I think the main issue is who is responsible for the children? For me the answer is not to avoid that responsibility".*

The example illustrates a case of negotiation in a school community that involves teachers, but also parents and students. The negotiation concerns questions about the ethos of the kindergarten: *"They told me that their philosophy is to be as child-centered as possible"*. However, the teacher finds the educational philosophy of

the kindergarten to be more close to *"a lassez-faire approach to education"*. As presented, there was a lack of discourse about the means and the ends of education. During the course of negotiations it became evident teachers had a different perspective on what is regarded as good for the children. The teacher had brought some rules with her to this culture without any guidelines: *"I started to pay attention to the eating habits of the children and I demanded some kind of behavior in lunch table"*. However, the case remains open: *"Now the dilemma still remains unsolved. The children behave in a different way with different teachers"*. The evaluation of this particular case reveals the lack of moral discourse in this school community.

Table 1 provides a summary of negotiation processes in the cases of confrontation:

Table 1. Teacher's negotiation strategies - cases of confrontation (N=8/26)

CONFLICTING ISSUE	CONFRONTING OPPONENT	END RESULT
student learning	parents(s)	conflict
relationships with students	colleague	conflict
relationships with students	colleague	conflict
relationships with students	colleague	no improvement (case closed)
collegial problems	colleague	conflict
relationships with students	colleague	no improvement (case closed)
relationships with students	school community	conflict
relationships with students	school community	conflict

As Table 1 demonstrates, most of the cases of confrontation dealt with relationships with students. Within the cases, the negotiating 'others' were often regarded as 'opponents', and the right way to treat them was a persistent and confronting negotiation, often without compromises. Most of the negotiations between colleagues and parents were not solved in the positive way. According to our analysis, our example reading case, likewise the majority of the cases showed no improvement after negotiations. Even worse, the majority of them ended up with conflict without hope to continue working for the betterment of a particular situation.

Cases of consultation

In the consultation approach (N=8/26) the process of bid and counterbid aimed at mutual solution while agents stuck to their interests. Within this concept, professional (self-) interests and as well as the interests of others were promoted according to prudence. The 'others' (students, parents, colleagues, principals) were seen as an aid to promote professional (self-)interests; the right way to, treat 'the other' was reasonable and flexible negotiating.

The following quote from a case report demonstrates a case of consultation between a teacher and her colleague:

> *"This is a conflict that doesn't seem to find a solution. My colleague uses psychological power on the children. She embarrasses them by asking intimate questions about their family problems, for example, about their parents' fights. She also manipulates and blackmails the children. I discussed this problem with her and after that discussion she started to criticize everything I do. She has for example made complaints about my work to my supervisor and spread gossip about my life to the parents. I told my supervisor my perspective of the story and she had a discussion with my colleague. We were supervised three times but the supervision did not solve our conflict. Maybe I should have asked for more help from the whole community to solve this problem. This problem is not solved, I only made it visible."*

Here the conflict deals with the professional morality of a colleague: *"My colleague uses psychological power on the children."* The teacher has tried to negotiate the problem with her colleague without any improvement. During the process, the colleague was defended by her comments and started to criticize the teacher. As a result, negotiations were arranged without any improvement to the basic problem: *"This problem is not solved, I only made it visible".*

Table 2 provides a summary of negotiation processes in the cases of consultation:

Table 2. Teacher's negotiation strategies - cases of consultation (N=8/26)

CONFLICTING ISSUE	NEGOTIATING PARTNER	END RESULT
domestic problems	parent(s)	no improvement (case closed)
domestic problems	parent(s)	conflict
collegial problem	colleague(s)	no improvement (case closed)
domestic problems	parent(s)	open case (work in progress)
collegial problems	colleague(s)	open case (work in progress)
collegial problems	colleague(s)	no improvement (case closed)
collegial problems	school community	open case (work in progress)
collegial problems	school community	case settled & solved

As Table 2 demonstrates, the cases of consultation dealt with collegial problems and students' family problems. Accordingly, colleagues and parents acted as negotiating partners. In two cases the whole school community was regarded as responsible for a particular situation and took part in the process of negotiation. Consultation approach was also more successful: only one of the eight cases investigated ended up with "conflict", three cases were "closed" with "no improvement" found in the particular dilemma in question. The remaining cases were interpreted with more positive outcomes like "open case-work in progress" (N=3), and "case settled and solved" (N=1).

Cases of co-operation

The majority of the conflicts were dealt with via a co-operation approach (N=10). The approach was characterized by the negotiation process of critical interaction on sharing, policy, and rules. This caused agents to change their minds about what they wanted and therefore to redefine their interests. Professional (self-)interests and the interests of 'others' (students, parents, colleagues, principals) were promoted out of reciprocity.

The following quote from a case report demonstrates a case of co-operation between a teacher and parents.

> *"I have a child in my kindergarten group who is retarded in many areas. This is a very difficult thing for his parents to admit. We have tried to discuss this issue with them with a medical doctor but these discussions have not changed their attitude. The child should start school after a year and a half but I don't think he is mature enough for it. Every time I talk with his parents I feel I am torturing them with suggestions of speech therapy etc. However, I think I didn't have a choice here. I told the parents that their child needs professional help in order to be ready for the school. The parents were very angry to me and they told me they would transfer their child to another kindergarten. The co-operation with me was finished. I knew I did the right thing because I had the support from my supervisor and colleagues. I had to take the perspective of the child even it did not please his parents. I had to be honest with the parents. Now it is their choice what to do with their child. I could only make suggestions to help the child to develop."*

The case illustrates a dilemma where the teacher represents a school institution with its demands and thinks that the child is not ready for them. As citizens, the parents have quite another stance in which they don't want to give up. Conceptually, this has caused a conflict between the school institution and individual parents. Practically, the problem is related to the particular teacher and to this child's parents. The parents, in this conflict "the others", also care for their child but they see the situation quite differently: even if the teacher has discussed the issue with them they *"have not changed their attitude"* and they *"were very angry."* Obviously, both parties interpret different things as relevant and this relevance problem has caused the conflict in which different issues are cared for. According to the teacher, the delayed development of the child is the issue that should be dealt with. However, the parents see the situation as the reverse: it is the teacher's apparently false interpretation of their child that should be addressed. Not surprisingly, the case did not end successfully because negotiations were "closed" with "no improvement":

Table 3 provides a summary of negotiation processes in the cases of co-operation:

Table 3. Teacher's negotiation strategies - cases of co-operation (N=10/26)

CONFLICTING ISSUE	COLLABORATING ASSOCIATE	END RESULT
student learning	parent(s)	no improvement (case closed)
student learning	parents(s)	open case (work in progress)
student learning	parent(s)	open case (work in progress)
domestic problems	parent(s)	case settled & solved
relationships with students	parent(s)	open case (work in progress)
relationships with students	parent(s)	case settled & solved
student learning	school community	open case (work in progress)
relationships with students	school community	case settled & solved
relationships with students	school community	case settled & solved
relationships with students	school community	open case (work in progress)

Within cases of co-operation the 'others' were mainly regarded as professional partners, and the right way to treat them was respectful and professionally based argumentative negotiating. The negotiations dealt with relationships with students and student learning. The basic rule of success was determined co-operation: the majority of the cases fell under the continuum category "open case - work in progress" (N=5) and "case settled and solved" (N=4). Only our example case was interpreted under the category "no improvement-case closed."

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We treated negotiation as a broad pedagogical concept and practice according to the premises of teachers' relational knowing. Negotiating issues were not simply what happened in schools and classrooms, they was also found 'inside' teachers and 'outside' institutions. However, as stated, many of these personal features and cultural aspects collapsed into one another in the processes and products of negotiation. They were involved in persons' action and reflection and made combinations of such features as intellectual skills, virtues, habits of mind, appropriate social behavior etc. In addition, it was found important to treat a wide array of issues, at least in part, as ethical by their nature. Most actions teachers took in schools and classrooms were

capable of expressing some moral meaning that, in turn, could influence surrounding others. Frequently, it was a question of familiar, routine aspects of teachers' work that were conveying moral meanings. This could also happen without teachers being aware of it. Consequently, our analysis aimed to construct negotiating ethics mainly from non-moral sources.

It was hard to find a center in teachers' negotiating practices. In terms of the issues presented in this paper, the process of negotiation can hold many centers: ways of justifications, relational ethics, practical involvement in negotiation situations etc. Therefore, we considered teachers' negotiation as an activity that cut across those areas. Within that activity, two features were identified: reciprocity and trust. Our empirical research pointed to reciprocity as a strong candidate for a successful criteria of negotiation. A mutual trust between negotiating partners can be seen as a condition for reciprocity. According to van Es (1996), reciprocity and trust are the moral minimum for any negotiation to be related to ethics. This means that the confrontation approach is frequently an inadequate method for solving pedagogical problems. Above the 'moral minimum' of trust and reciprocity we find the approaches of consultation and co-operation in which the two premises can act as a central guidelines.

As our results indicated, negotiation as pedagogical knowing and action were both interpreted to be uncertain practical problems. While teachers had the responsibility for resolving them, their grounds for judgements and actions were often implicit and unclear. This was due to the fact that situations were already tied to other agents, histories, and institutional arrangements. Therefore, it is important to promote teachers' dialogical understanding. It is hoped that analyzing and discussing pedagogical issues can help teachers to identify and articulate their knowing more clearly. The process also may help them to see the worth of social skills required for negotiations. Teachers may learn to listen more meaningfully, to acquire a sharper sense of moral diversity, and to respect differences of opinion. It may promote the understanding that schools are characterized by personal moral encounters.

The practical level of negotiation is not simply a question of application of general principles. Rather, it concerns our everyday practical deliberation that belongs to the social sector at hand. However, in our time there exist strong tendencies to reduce complex practical problems to procedural ones. According to our study and additional evidence (Reid, 1979, 1999; Barbules, 1990; Buchman & Floden, 1993; Waks, 2000), these tendencies are flawed because they i) fail to show how method in negotiation can be rendered into pedagogical practice with the aid of human agency; ii) obscure the multiple contexts within which negotiation is engaged; iii) neglect the

evidence that negotiation takes place in ourselves and in others through practical activities and communicative interchange.

As presented, teachers' actions were heavily informed by their professional obligations. Moreover, teachers' own moral character comes to the fore here - for example, in the teacher's very willingness, in the first place, to accept the professional obligation needed in each particular situation. Competencies of negotiation cannot be learned sufficiently during formal teacher preparation. It is the product of years, not credit hours. Teacher education programs should acknowledge how the continuing work in school settings persistently informs teachers' practice.

According to our results, a consistent variability in the quality and capability of teachers' negotiation competencies must be expected. However, in spite of its partial success, negotiation can be seen as an important category of teachers' professional behavior. Negotiating in the real world will never match the ideal speech situation, so the thing to be alert to is the degree of approximation. One negotiation will seldom be enough. Rather, moral consensus must be seen as a cumulative product of many crisscrossing negotiations over time.

However, no matter what the teacher's personal and professional commitments, each teacher is strongly affected by the school's ethos. No amount of time spent in college classes can develop sufficiently negotiation competencies and strategies; such continuous improvement is attained only through teachers' reflected experience as they work in schools. Schools all too often engender structures and atmosphere that fail to support negotiation in pedagogical issues. Sophistication of negotiation largely depends on the existence of forums at which teachers reasonably may deal with particular dilemmas. What are the conditions needed for sound professional judgement? Arendt (1982) notes that decision making and meaning are only tested and widened when different meanings exist in a community and when individuals are willing to subject the content of meanings to general debate. Frequently, contemporary schools tend not to be such forums.

If educational decision making is based upon negotiation, then different meanings must be exposed to public dialogue within the school community. Such a collective exchange of meanings presupposes that many different types of meanings become visible. Consequently, such an exchange presupposes a willingness and means to create conditions for open dialogue. Among the attributes, this situation is a move away from a rule-governed understanding of practice and opens up the number of meanings and descriptions of practice. Finally, as Colnerud *et al.* (1999) emphasize, such a collective reflection in a forms of negotiation accepts difference and divergence. It does not regard them as potentially debilitating. One learns to "live

with doubt." Then, the key is not unanimous agreement, but discourse and the testing of plural meanings.

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